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AIR INDIA SET TO UPGRADE ITS DREAMLINER FLEET

Air India's move to upgrade its 26 Dreamliners is to reduce operational disruptions and better overall reliability

FIRST AIRCRAFT IN CALIFORNIA FOR UPGRADE

Air India's fleet of Dreamliners — 26 legacy 787-8s and seven 787-9s — had undergone checks, including fuel switches, after the fatal crash on June 12 in Ahmedabad. Under the $400 million fleet retrofit programme announced in December 2022, the airline has flown its first Dreamliner to a Boeing facility in California in July

RE-CONFIGURATION TO BE DONE IF NEEDED

- The retrofit programme entails analysis of maintenance and configuration records for these aircraft, followed by modifications based on Boeing's service information bulletins, Air India said
- As part of a Reliability Enhancement Programme, the airline will upgrade the avionics of its 26 legacy B787-8 aircraft

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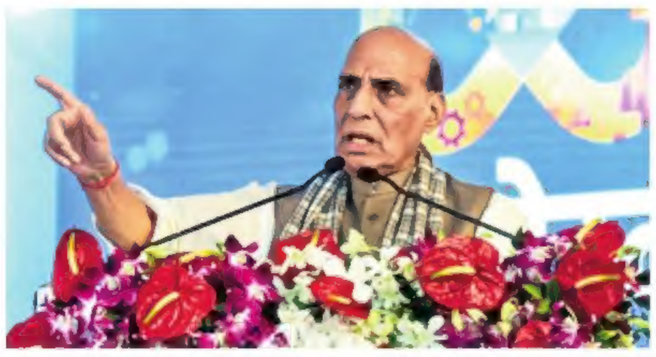
NARROW-BODY AND WIDE-BODY PLANES ARE PART OF AIR INDIA'S FLEET

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

Rajnath targets Trump, says India's rise irks some people



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh during the foundation stone-laying ceremony of BRAHMA Project to make rail coaches, in Raisen district, Madhya Pradesh | PTI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi being received by Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah and Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot in Bengaluru on Sunday | EXPRESS

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bhopal

IN a veiled dig at US President Donald Trump for his tariff action and repeated targeting of India, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday said that some people are not willing to accept India's economic progress and influence on the world stage.

Describing India's economy as the world's most "dashing and dynamic", Rajnath said that some people who consider themselves as Sabke Boss (everyone's boss) are unable to digest India's progress and economic development.

"They think that we are everyone's boss and how is India moving forward so fast? Many people are trying to do something, so that when things made by the hands of Indians in India go to other countries, they become more expensive than the things made in those countries," he said of Trump's tariff action against India.

"But, I'm confident that the pace at which India is progressing, no global power can stop our country from becoming a major world power," Singh asserted during his speech after laying the foundation of BEML Rail Hub for Manufacturing (BRAHMA) -- a greenfield rail manufacturing facility at central Madhya Pradesh's Raisen district.

Describing Operation Sindoor as a symbol of India's self-reliance and self-confidence, Singh asserted that the armed forces effectively utilised indigenous equipment, which played a pivotal role in the success of the operation. "India was able to reach this position only because it has taken the pledge to become Aatmanirbhar in the defence sector," he added.

Singh said India is now not only manufacturing equipment on its soil, but is also catering to the security needs of friendly nations. "When Modiji became PM for the first time in 2014, the defence sector exports from India were merely ₹600 crore, which 10 years later have soared to ₹24,000 crore."

Modi's retort to Don: We are growing the fastest

DEVARAJ B HIREHALLI
@ Bengaluru

IN a retort to US President Donald Trump's "India's dead economy" remark, Prime Minister Narendra Modi here on Sunday asserted that India is the fastest growing economy in the world.

"In the last 11 years, our economy has gone from 10th place to top five. We are now moving rapidly towards becoming one of the top three economies," he asserted at IIIT-B auditorium at Electronic City after inaugurating the Yellow Line of Bengaluru Metro rail and laying the foundation stone for Phase-3.

> **The journey to a Viksit Bharat will move forward hand in hand with Digital India and our next big priority should be becoming self-reliant in tech**
> PM Narendra Modi

Attributing the momentum in the economy to the spirit of "Reform, Perform and Transform," he said, "The journey to a Viksit Bharat will move forward hand in hand with Digital India and our next big priority should be becoming self-reliant in tech."

Modi's remarks were also aimed at Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, who had drawn economic parallels between the present NDA government and the UPA dispensation.

He said, "In 2014, India had only 74 airports, and now, there are over 160. Then, only three national waterways were operational, now there are 30. The country had only seven AIIMS and 387 medical colleges, but today, we have 22 AIIMS hospitals and 704 medical colleges, adding 1 lakh more medical seats in the past 11 years. The number of IITs has increased from 16 to 23, IIITs from 9 to 25, and IIMs from 13 to 21," he said.

Under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, over four crore pucca houses have been provided, while three crore more will be constructed. In the last 11 years, 12 crore toilets have been built, granting dignity, cleanliness and safety to crores of mothers and sisters, he claimed. P7

Munir meets US military brass

Pak Army chief Asim Munir, currently in the US, met top US military leaders, the army said. Munir met Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff General Dan Caine and invited him to visit Pakistan, the Pak army's statement said. This is Munir's second visit to US since India's Operation Sindoor | P11

YELLOW LINE TO GO OPERATIONAL TODAY

Commercial operations on the Yellow Line, which was inaugurated by PM Narendra Modi on Sunday, will commence from Monday. The PM also took a ride on the new Metro train from Ragigudda to Electronics City, for which he purchased a ticket through QR code-enabled ticket vending machines. He was accompanied by CM Siddaramaiah, DCM DK Shivakumar, Union minister Manohar Lal Khattar, and BJP Bengaluru South Lok Sabha member Tejasvi Surya, among others. According to BMRCL, the 16-station stretch will have a travel time of 35 minutes, with halts at all stations | P4

Prime Minister Narendra Modi flags off the Namma Metro Yellow Line, as Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, and other dignitaries look on, at Ragigudda Metro station in Bengaluru on Sunday | EXPRESS

Op Sindoor success proved India's tech prowess, PM says; lauds state

AKNISREE KARTHIK @ Bengaluru

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi said the success of India's forces in Operation Sindoor, destroying terrorist hideouts deep across the border, was due to India's technological prowess and the might of 'Make in India' in defence. The success of the operation showcased a 'New India' to the world. India's strength forced Pakistan, which came to defend the terrorists, to its knees within hours, he said, adding that Bengaluru and Karnataka contributed a lot to the success of the operation.

After laying the foundation stone for the Bangalore Metro Phase-3 (Orange Line) project worth over Rs 15,610 crore at Electronic City here on Sunday, he said, "I am coming to Bengaluru for the first time after Operation Sindoor. A major factor behind the victory is the indigenous technology and the might of Make in India in defence. There is a lot of contribution towards this from the youth of Bengaluru and Karnataka. I congratulate them," he said.

He said in 2014, when the NDA-led government came to power, India had metro services in just five cities and today, the network spans over 1,000 km across 24 cities, making India the third-largest metro network globally. From Independence till 2014, only 20,000 km of rail network was electrified and that from 2014 till now, in just 11 years, over 40,000 km of routes have been electrified.

> **I am coming to Bengaluru for the first time after Operation Sindoor. A major factor behind the victory is the indigenous technology and the might of Make in India in defence**
> Prime Minister Narendra Modi

'B'luru has put India on global map'

Amid chants of 'Modi Modi', the PM, who began his speech in Kannada, said Bengaluru has become a symbol of new India and that it has the 'philosophical knowledge' in its soul and 'tech knowledge' in its action. "Bengaluru has put India on the global tech map. The talent and the contribution of the people of Bengaluru to this success is immense," Modi said, adding that 'urban planning' and 'urban infrastructure' are needed for cities like Bengaluru and the city is prepared for the future.

CONTINUED ON P4

Karnataka EC chief sends notice to Rahul for proof of 'vote theft'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru/New Delhi

IN the wake of 'vote theft' allegations levelled by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi against the Election Commission of India at a press conference in New Delhi on August 7, the chief electoral officer (CEO) of Karnataka on Sunday served a notice to the Congress leader, asking him to share documents based on which he had alleged that a woman voted twice.

Gandhi had alleged that there was an instance of duplicate voting, citing the case of one Shakun Rani, who he claimed had voted twice in the Mahadevapura constituency in the 2024 general election and had stated that the document was from the ECI. The ECI, however, stated that its preliminary inquiry found no such evidence, with Shakun Rani herself asserting that she voted only once and the "tick-marked" document Gandhi displayed not being an official record issued by a polling officer.

The CEO has asked Gandhi to submit the documents he relied upon to support his allegations, so that an investigation can be conducted.

The Karnataka CEO's notice to Gandhi was followed by a reminder from the CEO of Haryana asking for Gandhi's declaration under oath that there was vote theft.

On Sunday, ECI authorities said: "Rahul Gandhi should either give a Declaration on Chief Electoral Officer, Karnataka's first Notice and Chief Electoral Officer, Haryana's reminder on time or apologise to the country."

In response, AICC General Secretary K C Venugopal dismissed the ECI's demands, stating, "We are not afraid of any notice."

Upping the ante over Gandhi's poll rigging claims, the Congress on Sunday launched a web portal for people to register and demand accountability from the EC against "vote theft", and express support for the demand for digital voter rolls. "Join us and support the demand for transparency from ECI," he said on X.

Police take husband Manjunath (in green shirt) into custody in Hosapete

Married off as minor, girl says will file plaint, mom kills her

KIRAN BALANNANAVAR
@ Hosapete

A woman allegedly killed her 17-year-old daughter, who threatened to go to the police for marrying her off as a minor, in Hosapete town of Vijayanagar recently.

After the girl's father filed a complaint on Friday, the police cracked the case within 48 hours and arrested the girl's mother and her husband on Sunday.

The girl was married to Manjunath alias Dali (24) four months ago. But a few days later, he started harassing the girl. Unable to bear the torture, she threatened both him and her mother that she would approach the police for marrying her off as a minor.

The mother then strangled the girl to death and buried the body with the help of two associates – Taran (20) and Akbar (21) -- near Mariyammanahlli bridge. The mother, Manjunath, and the two associates have been arrested under Sections 103, 85, 238, 61(1), 64(2)(i) of BNS and POCSO.

EXPRESS READ

Sharma quits as Cong foreign affairs dept chief

NEW DELHI: Veteran Congress leader and former Union minister Anand Sharma resigned as the chairman of the Grand Old Party's foreign affairs department on Sunday to help in its reconstitution and enable bringing in younger leaders.

Fresh gunfight erupts in Kishtwar district, J&K

SRINAGAR: Even as the anti-terror operation in south Kashmir's Kulgam entered tenth day on Sunday, another gunfight broke out between the terrorists and the security forces in mountainous Kishtwar district of Jammu and Kashmir | P10

SESSION

K'TAKA'S MONSOON SESSION FROM TODAY

The monsoon session of the legislature is slated to begin in Bengaluru on Monday, with the Ruling Congress government and Opposition BJP-JDS alliance expected to lock horns on a number of issues, including an alleged lack of funds | P4

HABITAT CONCERNS

Roar! India's Asiatic lion population jumps 32% in five years

JITENDRA CHOUBEY @ New Delhi

INDIA'S Asiatic lion population has grown from 674 in 2020 to 891 in 2025, a 32.2% increase, per the 16th Lion Population Estimation report released on Sunday. This conservation success is tempered by concerns, as most lions now live near human settlements, altering their natural hunting instincts and increasing reliance on livestock or human-provided food.

Asiatic lions are exclusively found in Gir National Park and Wildlife Sanctuary in Gujarat.

Data analysed by experts reveal only 20% of lions reside in the 258 sq. km core area of Gir National Park (GNP), Gujarat, where they can prey on wild animals. The park, with its buffer zone, spans over 1,400 sq. km. A senior Gujarat forest officer stated that the remaining lions, living near humans, "primarily prey on livestock or consume dead livestock that humans dispose of."

This proximity is troubling for locals. A June 2025 study by the Wildlife Institute of India, Gujarat Forest Department, Macalester College (USA), and NCBS (Bangalore) found lion attacks on livestock rising by 10% annually, with livestock losses per village up by 15% yearly. Human attacks, averaging 21 per year, show no significant increase.

"Lions receive food from locals and share space with them, while local communities benefit from enhanced livelihoods through tourism," said Yadvendradev V. Jhala, a study author and former WII chief.

To accommodate the growing population, the government expanded the lions' habitat to 30,000 sq. km, designating Barda in Porbandar as a secondary sanctuary. GNP hosts 15 lions per 100 sq. km, but outside, the density drops to three per 100 sq. km. "Populations are sparse outside the forest, making them more habituated to living near humans. This may change their natural behaviours," officials noted.

Officials questioned why lions, like tigers requiring 700-1,000 sq. km of human-free habitat under the Wildlife Protection Act, aren't given similar protected spaces.

The Asiatic lion in Gir National Park, Gujarat. A recent study found that Asiatic lion attacks on livestock near Gir have increased by 10% per year | ANI